

29 June 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

At 1145 on 27 June 1972, I saw John Dean at his office in the Executive Office Building.

I told him that I had spoken to Director Helms and found that what I had said to Dean the previous day did indeed reflect Helms' views accurately. That he felt any involvement of the Agency would be most counter productive and furthermore, we had a legislative constraint about the expenditure of our funds within the United States. We had to clear them with the Chairmen of the CIA Oversight Committees in both House and Senate. This visibly lessened his enthusiasm.

I then repeated my arguments that this caper while presently seeming very large would be overtaken by other spicier developments. Unfortunate though its consequences might be currently, Agency involvement by direction at the highest level would undoubtedly become known sooner or later and would then reach to people who were still uninvolved. He nodded. I said that my mind boggled that such risks as those involved in this caper could have been taken for such an unremunerative target. Involving the Agency would transform what was now a medium-sized conventional explosive into a multi-megaton explosion and simply was not worth the risk to all concerned.

Dean thanked me looking glum and said he agreed with my judgment in all of these matters.

Vernon A. Walters
Lieutenant General, USA

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MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

On 28 June at 1130 John Dean asked me to see him at his office in the Executive Office Building. I saw him alone.

He said that the Director's meeting with Patrick Gray, FBI Director, was cancelled and that John Ehrlichman had suggested that Gray deal with me instead.

The problem was how to stop the FBI investigation beyond the five suspects. Leads led to two other people -- Ken Dahlberg and a Mexican named Guena. Dean said that the \$89,000 was unrelated to the bugging case and Dahlberg was refusing to answer questions. Dean then asked hopefully whether I could do anything or had any suggestions.

I repeated that as Deputy Director, I had no independent authority. I was not in the channel of command and had no authority other than that given me by the Director. The idea that I could act independently was a delusion and had no basis in fact.

Dean then asked what might be done and I said that I realized he had a tough problem, but if there were Agency involvement, it could be only at Presidential directive and the political risks that were concomitant appeared to me to be unacceptable. At present there was a high explosive bomb but intervention such as he had suggested would transform it into a megaton hydrogen bomb. The present caper was awkward and unpleasant. Directed intervention by the Agency could be electorally mortal if it became known and the chances of keeping it secret until the election were almost nil. I noted that scandals had a short life in Washington and other newer spicier ones soon replaced them. I urged him not to become unduly agitated by this one.

He then asked if I had any ideas and I said that this affair already had a strong Cuban flavor and everyone knew the Cubans were conspiratorial and anxious to know what the policies of both parties would be towards Castro. They, therefore, had a plausible motive for attempting this amateurish job which any skilled technician would deplore. This might be costly but it would be plausible.

Dean said he agreed that this was the best tack to take but it might cost half a million dollars. He also agreed (for the second time) that the risks of agency involvement were unacceptable. After a moment's thought he said that he felt that Gray's cancellation of his appointment with Director Helms might well be reversed in the next few hours.

Dean thanked me and I left.

Vernon A. Walters
Lieutenant General, USA